and then a developed capacity of receptive aware-
ness, understanding, reply of action, previsional
initiation of action,—an evolving consciousness
which is half-knowledge, half-ignorance. All that is
unknown is met on the basis of what is known; but
as this knowledge is imperfect, as it receives
imperfectly and responds imperfectly to the contacts
of things, there can be a misprision of the new
contact as well as a misprision or deformation of the
intuitive response, a double source of error.
It is evident, in these conditions, that Error is
a necessary accompaniment, almost a necessary
condition and instrumentation, an indispensable
step or stage in the slow evolution towards know-
ledge in a consciousness that begins from nescience
and works in the stuff of a general nescience. The
evolving consciousness has to acquire knowledge by
an indirect means which does not give even a
fragmentary certitude; for there is at first only a
figure or a sign, an image or a vibration physical in
character created by contact with the object and a
resulting vital sensation which have to be inter-
preted by mind and sense and turned into a
corresponding mental idea or figure.

Things thus
experienced and mentally known have to
be related
together; things unknown have to be
observed,
discovered, fitted into the already
acquired sum of
experience and knowledge. At each step
different
possibilities of fact, significance,
judgment, inter-
pretation, relation present themselves;
some have
to be tested and rejected, others
accepted and